4840, representing about 135 species. The eight colored plates relate exclusively to the eggs of the Great Auk, seven of which and a cast of another are figured, the accompanying text occupying pages 364–384. It is a matter for sincere congratulation that Mr. Wolley's valuable field notes and records are finally being made accessible, and given permanent form in a manner so attractive and under such competent editorship.—J. A. A.

Economic Ornithology.—The ravages of the cotton boll weevil in Texas during the last few years and its prospective extension into other cotton-growing districts has led the Biological Survey to undertake investigations to determine what species of birds feed upon this weevil and to what extent they are likely to prove a check upon its increase. The preliminary results thus far reached have been summarized by Mr. Vernon Bailey, in a special report,[1] based on the examination of the stomachs of a large number of birds collected in and around the cotton fields, chiefly in the month of November, 1904, in southern Texas. The weevils were found in the stomachs of about a dozen species of birds, out of about 38 species examined, usually in small numbers, but in sufficient quantity to show that the efficient protection of insectivorous birds is of considerable importance to cotton-growers.

The economic relations of the Bob-white and other quails of the United States is the subject of a report by the late Dr. Judd, published also as a 'Bulletin' of the Biological Survey.[2] The eastern Bobwhite and its subspecies, here treated collectively, occupies, quite naturally, about two thirds of the report, the species of the Southwest the remaining third. There are two plates by Fuertes, one of 'Bobwhite in a potato field,' the other of the 'Gambel quail.' The first is colored and serves as an attractive frontispiece. Various text cuts illustrate the seeds of different weeds that are a pest to the farmer, tons of the seeds of which are destroyed annually by Bobwhite. This bird is considered (1) as an ally of the farmer, (2) as an asset of the farm, (3) as an article of food, (4) as an object of sport, (5) in relation to its esthetic value; several pages are also devoted to measures for its preservation and propagation, and about fifteen pages to a detailed account of its food habits. About 53 per cent of its food consists of seeds, chiefly those of plants injurious to agriculture. An additional 15 per cent is insects, which includes such noxious species as the potato beetle, chinch bug, weevils of various species, cutworms, grasshoppers, and many others. The remainder of its food consists mainly

[1]Birds known to eat the Boll Weavil. By Vernon Bailey. Chief Field-Naturalist, Biological Survey. U. S. Department of Agriculture, Biological Survey, Bulletin No. 22, 8vo, pp. 16, 1905.

[2]The Bobwhite and other Quails of the United States in their Economic Relations By Sylvester D. Judd, Assistant, Biological Survey. U. S. Department of Agriculture, Bureau of Biological Survey, Bulletin No. 21. 8vo, pp. 66, 1905.

of wild berries and other wild small fruits. The California and other western species of quails have of course quite similar habits, but prove to be more or less destructive locally, from their great numbers, to certain farm crops, as grains and fruits, and especially grapes. They likewise destroy large quantities of weed seeds and injurious insects, but are, on the whole, considerably less insectivorous than the Bobwhites.

The Horned Larks in reference to their relation to agriculture have recently been studied by Mr. W. L. McAtee.[1] He finds that about 20 per cent. of their food consists of insects, ranging from less than two per cent. in the winter months to over 50 per cent. during some of the summer months. The rest is vegetable matter, consisting largely of the seeds of weeds and other useless plants, practically no cultivated fruit being taken, and the amount of grain that enters into their fare is a negligible quantity, although at some localities in California complaints have been made of their depradation upon newly-sown wheat. It is found, in fact, that the California horned larks differ markedly from those of other parts of the country in the high percentage of grain they consume, being three times that of the larks of other localities. On the whole, however, says the verdict: "So small in amount is the grain thus taken and over such restricted areas that, aside from the fact that at small expense all damage can be prevented, the loss bears no comparison to the benefits conferred. The horned lark by its services to agriculture earns a right to live, and deserves protection at the hands of man."— J. A. A.

CORRESPONDENCE.

On the Criticism of Heft III of 'Die Vögel der paläarktischen Fauna.'

To the Editors of 'The Auk':

Dear Sirs:— It has always been a pleasure to me to see that my ornithological writings have been looked upon favourably in America, and I am anxious that they are fully understood in your country, because I have a very high opinion of most of the ornithological work done in America. This is the reason why I wish to say a few words about the generally kind review of Part III of my book on the birds of the palæarctic fauna, in 'The Auk,' Vol. XXII, p. 428. The reviewer takes exception to my "conservatism" in respect to gen-

[1]The Horned Larks in their Relations to Agriculture. By W. L. McAtee, Assistant, Biological Survey. U. S. Department of Agriculture, Biological Survey, Bull. No. 23. 8vo, pp. 37, 2 plates, and 13 text cuts.